

SECTION 3. COMMUNITY SETTING

A. Regional Context

The Town of Arlington is in eastern Massachusetts and lies at the edge of the Boston Basin (a broad, flat floodplain). Located about six miles northwest of Boston, Arlington's population of 45,304 (2019 American Community Survey) occupies 5.6 square miles or 3,509.9 acres. Arlington is part of Middlesex County and the Greater Boston metropolitan area; its neighboring communities are Lexington, Winchester, Medford, Somerville, Cambridge, and Belmont (see Map 3-1). The primary commercial corridors of Massachusetts Avenue and Broadway bisect the town and connect it to Cambridge and Somerville on the east and Lexington on the west.

Arlington is a town governed by a five-member Select Board, an elected representative Town Meeting of 252 members from 21 precincts, and an appointed Town Manager, similar in governance to the adjacent towns of Lexington, Winchester, and Belmont.

1. Regional Transportation Networks

Many major roads (Massachusetts Avenue and Routes 2, 2A, 3A, 16, and 60) pass through Arlington, linking

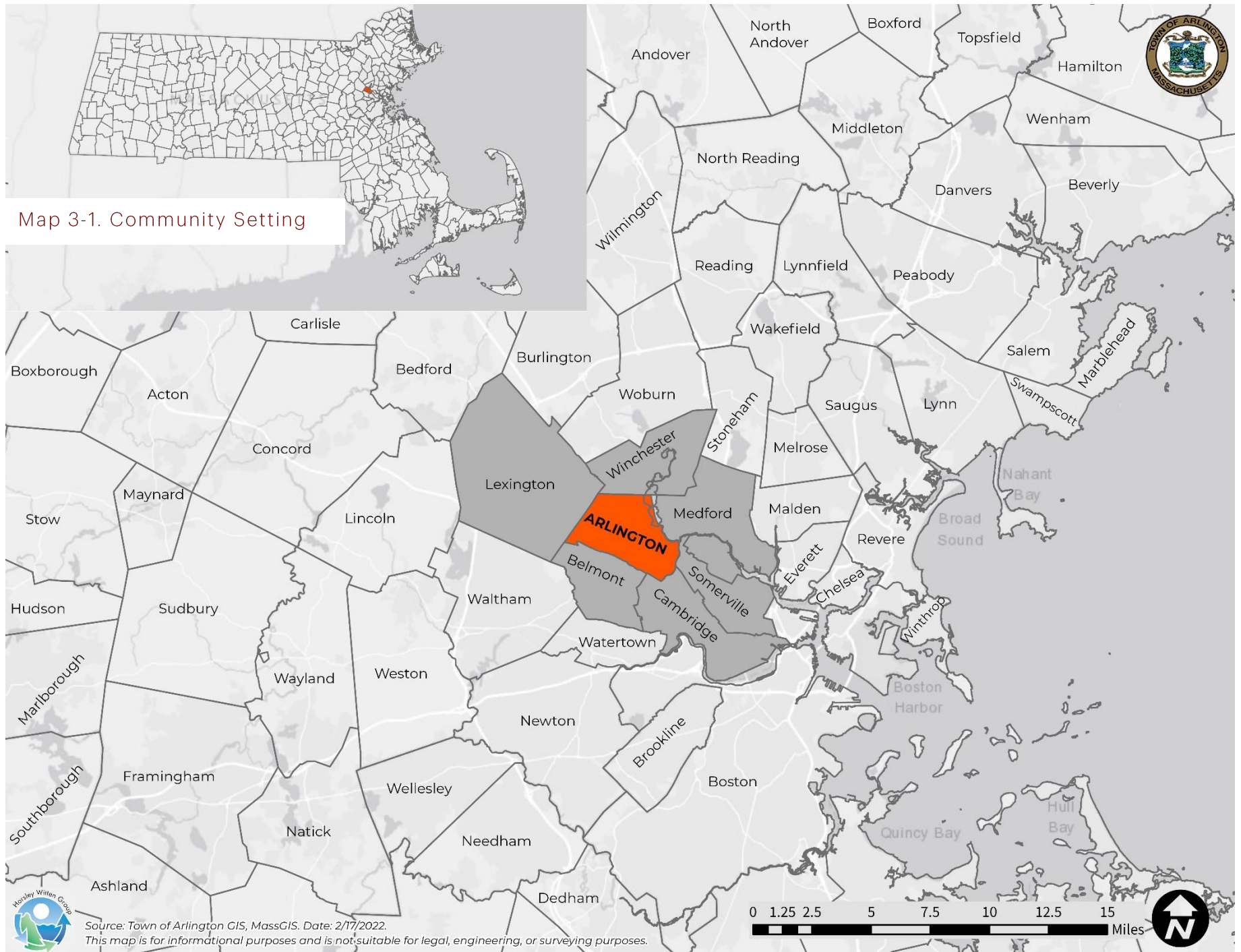
residents with neighboring towns, Boston, Cambridge, and nearby highways (Interstates 93 and 95). During peak commuting hours these roads are highly congested. Massachusetts Bay Transit Authority (MBTA) bus transportation also services Arlington, carrying commuters to regional destinations, including the MBTA Alewife T Station on the Cambridge border. The Minuteman Bikeway passes through Arlington, parallel to Mass Avenue and along parts of Mill Brook and Summer Street. The 10-mile Bikeway starts just over the Arlington border in Cambridge, traverses Arlington and Lexington, and ends near Bedford Center. It is one of the busiest rail-trails in the country.

2. Open Space Resources Shared with Other Towns

Arlington shares a few important and unique resources with neighboring towns and is actively engaged in regional planning efforts to preserve, protect, and enhance those areas.

Arlington Reservoir

Arlington Reservoir combines a water body of 29 acres and land totaling 65 acres, including woods, open areas,



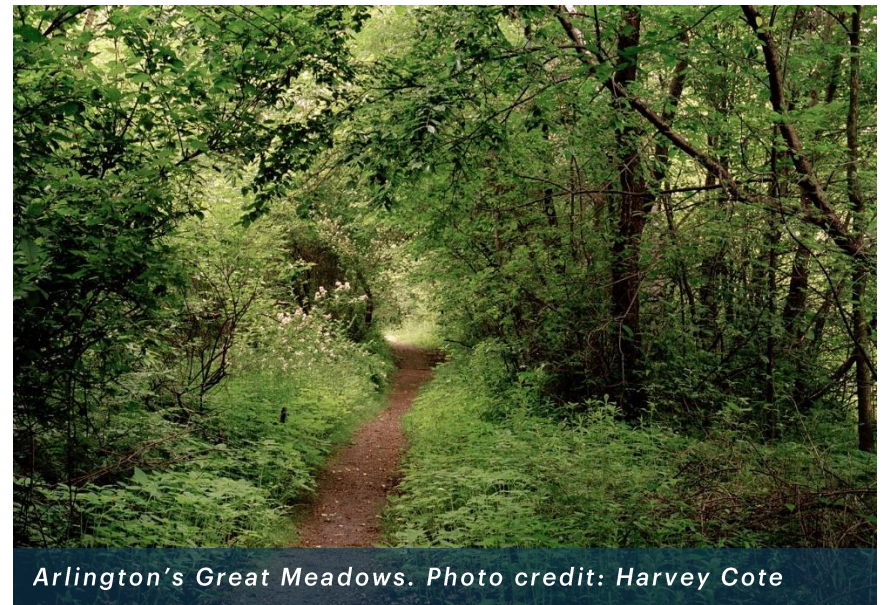
and a sandy beach. More than half of this site is in Lexington, but the land is owned by the Town of Arlington. The Reservoir is frequented by many visitors, particularly in the summer, because of its beach and supervised swimming area. A one-mile wooded path around the Reservoir is used regularly by walkers, joggers, bird watchers, and others who seek a quiet place to enjoy the outdoors close to home. Significant changes are being made in both towns that will improve visitor amenities as part of the current Reservoir Master Plan renovation project.

Arlington's Great Meadows

Arlington's Great Meadows, also located in Lexington but owned by Arlington, is a 183-acre area with a significant number of wetlands and wet meadows. Several entrances are available from the Minuteman Bikeway, and boardwalks have been built and repaired by volunteers in recent years to make the trails more accessible. Residents of Arlington, Lexington, and neighboring towns often visit the Great Meadows to walk, bike, or ski and to observe the diverse flora and fauna, especially the large variety of birds.

Minuteman Bikeway

This rail/trail conversion was dedicated in 1992. The 10-mile paved Bikeway runs from Cambridge's Alewife T



(MBTA) Station through Arlington and Lexington, terminating near Bedford Center with an extension planned to the Concord town line. The Arlington section is called the Donald Marquis/Minuteman Commuter Bikeway in honor of the former long-time Town Manager who played a significant role in leading the effort to convert the former railway line into an active trail. The MBTA operated passenger service on this former railroad line through 1977. After a private company purchased the right of way and eventually went bankrupt, the Towns of Lexington, Arlington, and Bedford moved forward with efforts to eventually establish the Bikeway, which is still owned by the MBTA; each town section is managed by the respective

community. The Bikeway in Arlington abuts a mix of residential, commercial, and industrial land uses as well as numerous Town-owned open spaces, conservation lands, and recreational facilities.

Water Bodies

Arlington shares several water bodies with neighboring communities. Alewife Brook on the eastern side of town creates borders with Belmont, Cambridge, and Somerville. It flows into the Mystic River, which then passes through Medford, Somerville, and other communities on its way to Boston Harbor. The Upper and Lower Mystic Lakes border Arlington, Medford, and Winchester. Alewife Brook, Mystic River, the Mystic Lakes, and adjacent green space are all owned and controlled by the Massachusetts Department of Conservation and Recreation (DCR). As noted above, the Arlington Reservoir on the western edge of town spans the border between Arlington and Lexington.

Parkways

Multiple highways and roads (Routes 2, 2A, 3A, 16, and 60) pass through Arlington. Alewife Brook Parkway (Route 16) and the Mystic Valley Parkway offer particularly scenic views and open space values. These two roadways are owned and controlled by DCR and are shared with Cambridge, Somerville, and Medford. Planned over 100 years ago as part of Charles Eliot's

plan for the Boston metropolitan area, these parkways were designed as carriageways that would provide scenic views to the traveling public. Besides serving as transportation corridors, these parkways provide a buffer area between land uses.

The DCR Parkways Master Plan (August 2020) is DCR's vision for an interconnected network of diverse parkways throughout Boston's metropolitan region that include the Alewife Brook and Mystic Valley Parkways. The DCR Plan identifies short-term improvements and long-term capital investments and provides policy and design guidance for improving its parkways for all travel modes and for all users.

3. Regional Planning Efforts

Arlington is a member of the Metropolitan Area Planning Council (MAPC), a regional planning agency that serves 101 towns and cities in Greater Boston. The Town participates actively in MAPC planning activities, such as the Inner Core Committee (which includes representatives of communities close to Boston who meet regularly to discuss common interests, such as open space).

The Town is also a member of the Metropolitan Mayors Coalition, a group of cities and towns in the urban core of the Metro Boston area, whose leaders pledge to work together to create solutions for common, regional

issues. One focus of the Coalition is preparing the region for climate change. The Climate Preparedness Taskforce works on projects and programs to promote climate mitigation (reducing greenhouse gas emissions) and enhance climate resiliency (strengthening communities socially and structurally). The Town actively participates in the Taskforce.

Increasing development pressures in the Alewife region around the Route 2 rotary at the MBTA Alewife T Station and more frequent flooding and traffic congestion in East Arlington in recent years have caused growing concerns and activism.

The Tri-Community Flood Group for Arlington, Belmont, and Cambridge includes town engineers, elected officials, and concerned neighbors and volunteers. Among the issues the group discusses are the combined sewer overflows (CSOs) that enter the brook from Cambridge and Somerville after heavy rains. The group last met in 2019, but recent advocacy is renewing attention to this issue.

Save the Alewife Brook is a volunteer-led effort established in 2021 to address flooding and water quality problems in the Alewife Brook, particularly the CSO discharges which send sewage-contaminated water into the brook. An estimated 1,200 Arlington residents live in the 100-year flood plain near the Alewife Brook.

During flood events, that unsafe water enters their homes and also contaminates publicly owned lands adjacent to the brook. Climate change threatens to exacerbate the problem with wetter rain seasons, more frequent and more severe storms, and sea level rise.

The Mystic River Watershed Association (MyRWA) works to protect the Mystic River area, including Alewife Brook, Mill Brook, and the Mystic River and Lakes. It sponsors a variety of water quality monitoring programs and offers educational and outreach opportunities throughout the year. MyRWA represents a total of 21 towns and cities within the watershed area. The river and much of the land along the waterway is managed by DCR, which completed a master plan for the area in 2009. MyRWA headquarters are located in the former Central School next to Town Hall in Arlington. Discussion of MyRWA's current projects in Arlington occurs throughout this OSRP document.

The Town is a member of the Resilient Mystic Collaborative, a partnership among the 21 cities and towns within the Mystic River Watershed and facilitated by MyRWA. The Town also signed on to the Charles River Climate Compact, a partnership between 15 cities and towns within the Charles River Watershed. This compact is facilitated by the Charles River Watershed Association.

Arlington is one of 45 communities designated as part of Freedom's Way National Heritage Area, a federally sponsored program to cultivate a shared stewardship agenda to protect, enhance and promote the nature, culture, and history of the region. Designated by Congress in 2009, the National Heritage Area spans 994 square miles and educates visitors about the region where the American Revolution began.

Massachusetts Avenue in Arlington is also named Battle Road Scenic Byway, an All-American Road as part of the 2021 designations to America's Byways® through the Federal Highway Administration National Scenic Byways Program. This designation is the first All-American Road in Massachusetts. With this designation comes recognition of the lasting importance of the events of April 1775 in the Greater Boston region.

B. History of the Community

The following review of historic themes and development periods in Arlington is largely based on information in the Town's Historic Preservation Survey Master Plan Final Report (2019).

Menotomy: Native American and Colonial Settlement, ca. 1500 – 1806

The Massachuset tribe were the first people known to inhabit the land they called Menotomy, now known as

Arlington. This powerful tribe lived in the valleys of the Mystic, Charles, and Neponset rivers, controlled rich fishing grounds along the coast, and practiced traditional agriculture and hunting. By the early 1630s, much of their land was occupied by English colonists who began settling in the area, then part of the Cambridge hinterland. An important founding event for the colonists of Menotomy was the building of Captain George Cooke's gristmill on Mill Brook near Mystic Street in 1637. The mixed agricultural and milling economy was manifested in rural farmsteads, mostly along Massachusetts Avenue, with small-scale mills and associated housing along Mill Brook and the Mystic River. A small town center developed near the intersection of Massachusetts Avenue and Pleasant Street. Slow but steady population growth occurred during this period, with a brief flourish of industrial-based prosperity at the turn of the 19th century.

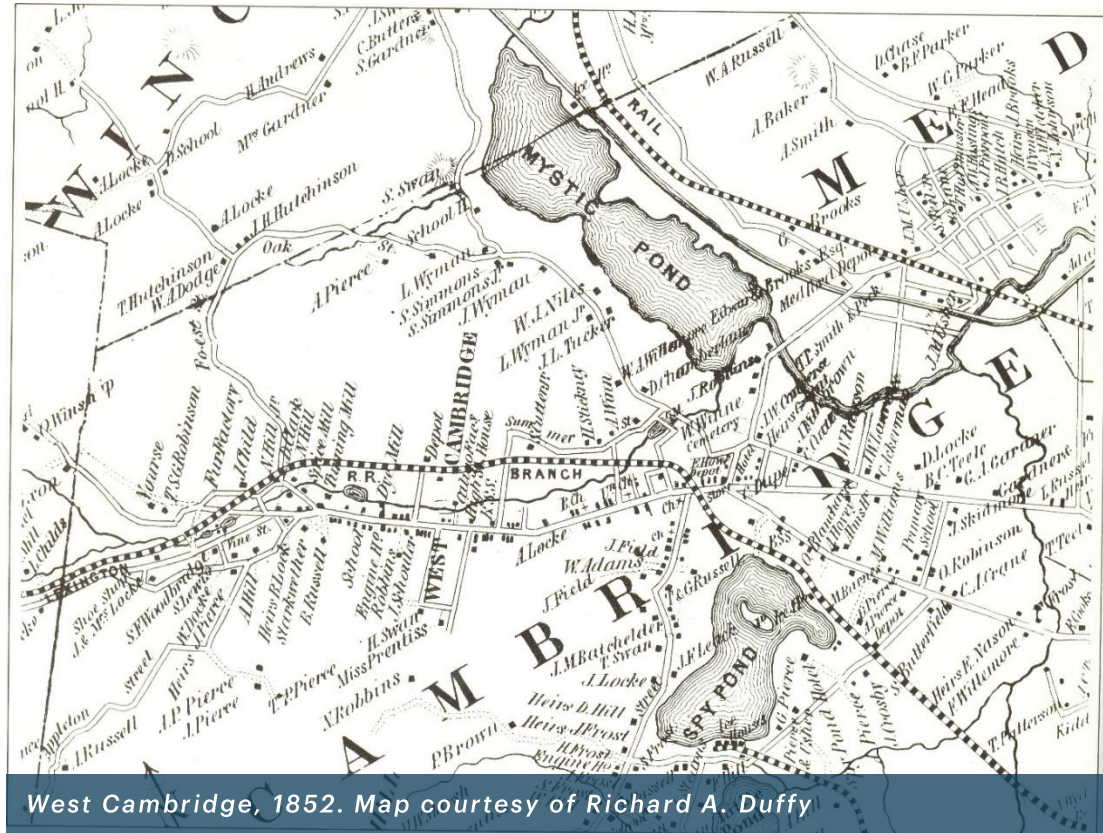
West Cambridge: Early Industrialization and Population Growth, 1807 – 1866

The Town incorporated as West Cambridge in 1807, reflecting its considerable growth as a distinctive community. Major transportation improvements included the establishment of the Middlesex Turnpike (now Lowell Street) in 1810, the arrival of the railroad in 1846, and later the omnibus and horse-drawn street railway along Massachusetts Avenue. Industrial

expansion included a diversity of industries, although most were still comparatively small in scale; ice harvesting flourished at Spy Pond. The agricultural landscape persisted throughout most areas of town, gradually developing into commercial production in large-scale market gardens in the rich flatlands of East Arlington. Industrial and agricultural development began to attract a substantial immigrant community as well, and the town's first large housing subdivision was laid out in East Arlington in 1856. Connections with Boston propelled the development of genteel country houses near the town center and hillsides for wealthy mercantile commuters. At the same time, part of West Cambridge was annexed to Winchester in 1850 and another part was separated to create Belmont in 1859.

Arlington: Early Suburbanization and Market Gardens, 1867 – 1910

Arlington adopted its present name in 1867 to honor Civil War veterans buried at Arlington National Cemetery in Arlington, Virginia. Beginning with its re-incorporation, the town witnessed peaks and declines of industrial development (including mills, factories, and

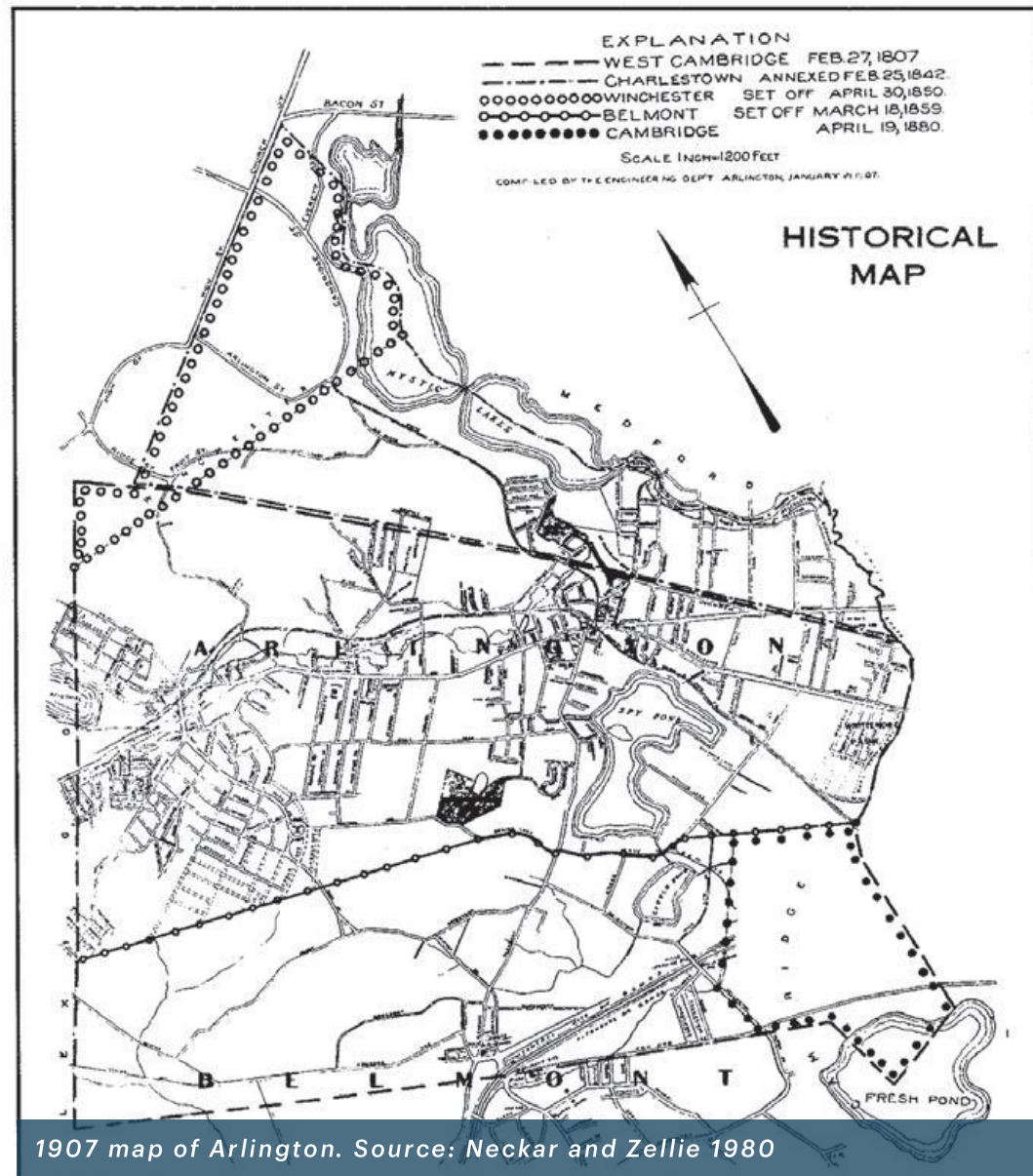


ice-harvesting), which was replaced by the predominance of market gardening and residential growth. Civic improvements and municipal services abounded. Planned housing developments appeared in the western part of town; three major commercial centers with substantial masonry buildings coalesced along Massachusetts Avenue; and grand institutional and civic development concentrated near the center of

Arlington. Electric railway service was extended throughout the town; the first automobile owned by a local resident appeared in 1900. With easier and more affordable transportation, the town's population quadrupled during this period. Vacationers were accommodated in hotels and health facilities; farms were subdivided for middle-class housing, including a substantial community of literary and visual artists in Arlington Heights; and the immigrant population continued to expand. Two- and three-family housing became common in the early 20th century to accommodate the town's growing population. Civic leaders became aware of the need to preserve the town's open space, and in 1896 land was assembled to create Menotomy Rocks Park as the first large public park.

Accelerated Suburbanization, 1911 – 1940

The Boston area's continued population growth and accompanying demand for residential development in this period led to the closing of most of Arlington's large market gardens and the selling off of their land for single-, two-, and three-family housing to accommodate an increasingly working-class



population. Major immigrant groups included the Irish, Italians, Swedes, and Armenians. In northern and eastern Arlington, the town's last major farms were mostly subdivided by the 1930s. Extension of rapid transit to Harvard Square in Cambridge in 1912 was also pivotal to the growth of East Arlington. Massachusetts Avenue became almost exclusively commercialized. The Town adopted its first "Town Plan" in 1916 followed by the Zoning Bylaw in 1924. Many of the town's 18th century houses along Massachusetts Avenue were torn down and redeveloped for auto-oriented uses and larger-scale commercial development. The business zoning district was initially wider and broader along the entire stretch of the corridor as well as along Broadway. In the 1930s, the Concord Turnpike (Route 2) was built to relieve traffic on Massachusetts Avenue, diverting it away from Arlington Center and reducing connections to the neighboring Town of Belmont.

Post-War Modernization, 1941 – 1970

Arlington's position as a desirable bedroom community in close proximity to downtown Boston was solidified after World War II with the construction of subdivisions of single-family, Colonial Revival-style, and ranch houses; low- and medium-rise apartment blocks (mostly along Massachusetts Avenue, with some on isolated, surviving large parcels); and modern commercial strip development along the major thoroughfares. The post-

war home-building boom was significant in some lowland areas of the town that previously had been preserved as farmland and floodplains. Route 128 was constructed nearby in the 1950s, signaling the pre-eminence of automobile-related commuting and development. Several modern office buildings, public housing developments, and schools were built, and the demolition of 18th and 19th century structures continued, especially along and adjacent to Massachusetts Avenue. The Town's second town-wide Comprehensive Plan was adopted in 1963 and set the path for further zoning amendments. One of Arlington's few remaining 19th century factories, the Old Schwamb Mill (1861), was saved from near destruction in 1969, marking the beginning of a renewed interest in preservation activities throughout the town.

The Past Fifty Years, 1970-2020

Arlington put a development moratorium on building permits in 1972 to control the commercial growth and higher density and taller residential development along Massachusetts Avenue. Following passage of the State Zoning Act update in 1975, the Town overhauled the Zoning Bylaw, adopting stricter development regulations, downzoning parcels along Massachusetts Avenue and other corridors, and creating new, smaller zoning districts to limit redevelopment potential. Zoning bylaw changes continue to adapt to changing needs.

The effects of past development remain visible throughout Arlington today in long-established residential neighborhoods and business centers in the East, Center, and Heights. With little remaining buildable land, new opportunities are focused on redevelopment and reuse of existing structures while protecting valued parks and conservation lands. Recent decades have seen enhancements in transportation (Minuteman Bikeway, Complete Streets), new arts and culture resources (Arlington Center for the Arts, Dallin Museum), and more small businesses, especially restaurants, as well as significant improvements in the Town's schools, parks, open spaces, and natural resources.

The Town adopted its current Master Plan in 2015. The Zoning Bylaw was then recodified in 2018 and other substantive amendments have been made to allow mixed-use development in business districts and new uses and development standards in industrial zones, which are located primarily along the Mill Brook corridor. Altogether, Arlington has become very attractive for families, young professionals, and long-time residents seeking a friendly, accessible community near Boston and all that the region has to offer.

¹ This plan uses data from the 2020 U.S. Decennial Census and 2014-2019 American Community Survey 5-year estimates. At the time of its writing, 2020 U.S. Decennial Census data was not available for all referenced community characteristics in this Plan.

C. Community Characteristics

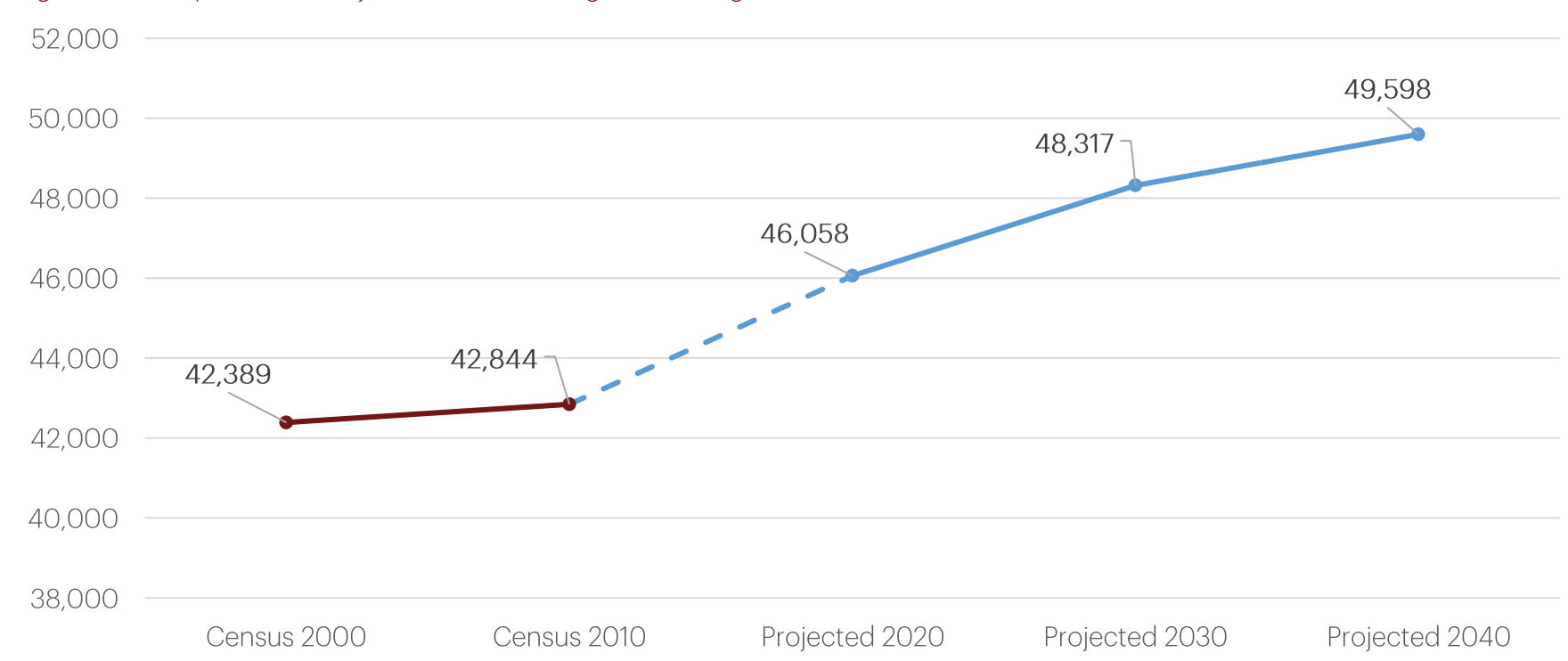
Understanding Arlington's population characteristics and recent trends is essential so the Town can maximize the appropriate use of its open space resources and plan for the future. The following discussion provides statistics related to population demographics and then analyzes how Arlington's open space planning can respond to those data.

1. Population Characteristics

Current and Projected Population

Arlington's population is growing. In 2019, the American Community Survey (ACS) estimated Arlington's population to be 45,304, a noticeable increase of 6.8% from the 2010 U.S. Census, which reported population of 42,389.¹ Projections developed by the University of Massachusetts Donahue Institute (UMDI) and MAPC for the Massachusetts Department of Transportation (MassDOT) forecast steady population growth in Arlington over the next 20 years. Projections showed a local population of 46,058 in 2020, 48,307 in 2030, and 49,598 in 2040, increases of about 7.4%, 4.9%, and 2.7%, respectively (Figure 3-1).

Figure 3-1. Population Projections for Arlington through 2040



Source: MassDOT Socio-Economic Projections for 2020 Regional Transportation Plans, 2018

Population Density

Arlington is a densely populated community covering approximately 5.5 square miles, of which 5.2 square miles are land, and 0.3 square miles are surface water. According to the 2019 ACS, Arlington's 5.2 square mile land area is home to a population of 45,304 people with a population density of about 8,712 person per square

mile. This population density is in the middle range of Arlington's surrounding communities (see Table 3-1). Except for the Town of Lexington which has a much larger land area, Arlington and its neighboring cities and towns have relatively high population densities, indicating limited open space resources and areas for Arlington residents nearby.

Table 3-1. Population Density of Arlington and Neighboring Towns

Town	Population	Population Density
Arlington	45,304	8,325.7
Belmont	26,116	5,316.9
Cambridge	118,927	16,470.2
Lexington	33,132	1,910.3
Medford	57,341	6,934.1
Somerville	81,360	18,404.8
Winchester	22,738	3,545.8

Source: American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates 2019

Table 3-2. Change in Age Groups as a Percent of Total Population, 2010 to 2019

Age Group	2010	2019	% Change
Under 10	12.1%	12.9%	0.8%
10-19	8.4%	10.0%	1.6%
20-24	4.1%	3.5%	-0.6%
25-34	14.0%	14.5%	0.5%
35-44	16.4%	15.2%	-1.2%
45-59	23.4%	20.3%	-3.1%
60-74	13.7%	16.4%	2.7%
75 and older	7.8%	7.2%	-0.6%

Source: American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates, 2010 and 2019

Current and Projected Age Distribution

As shown in Table 3-2, age groups experiencing slight increases from 2010 to 2019 were school age children (19 years and younger) and adults 25-34 years. This information may indicate some young families moving into Arlington. The proportion of residents 60-74 years increased almost 3%, the largest increase of all age groups.

Projections over the next 20 years show a decrease in children under 10 of nearly 20%, while the percentage of older children will increase. Residents between 35 and 44 are also projected to decrease, while residents aged 60-74 would experience a significant increase of over 50% (Table 3-3).

Residents with Disabilities

In 2019, about 4,031 Arlington residents (8.9% of the population of about 45,304) had mobility and/or self-care limitations. Of the 4,031 individuals with a disability, approximately 68.7% are 65 years and older.

Table 3-3. Population Projections by Age Group

Age Group	Census 2010	Projection 2020	Projection 2030	Projection 2040	% Change 2010-2040
Under 10	5,378	5,136	4,459	4,355	-19%
10-19	3,990	4,637	5,091	4,924	23%
20-24	1,447	1,688	1,844	2,003	38%
25-34	5,817	5,496	5,401	5,998	3%
35-44	7,134	6,933	7,091	6,687	-6%
45-59	9,763	10,065	10,381	10,612	9%
60-74	5,682	6,823	8,000	8,701	53%
75 and older	3,633	3,480	3,797	4,501	24%
Total Population	42,844	44,258	46,064	47,781	11.52%

Source: MassDOT Socio-Economic Projections for 2020 Regional Transportation Plans (UMass Donahue Institute), 2018

Racial and Linguistic Diversity

Most residents identify as one race, with 79.7% of Arlington's population in 2019 identifying as white and 20.3% identifying as another race or more than one race (Table 3-4). Arlington's residents of color identify as Asian (12.3%, mostly Asian Indian and Chinese), African American (3.1%), or mixed race (3.8%). The fastest growing subgroup is Asian. Across categories, 4.9% identify as Hispanic or Latino. By contrast, people of color account for 47.3% of the Boston metropolitan area's population and 23.2% of Middlesex County's total population.

Table 3-4. Racial Identity of Arlington Residents

	2010	2019	Change
One Race	97.3%	96.2%	-1.1%
White	86.0%	79.7%	-6.3%
Black or African American	2.2%	3.1%	0.9%
American Indian and Alaska Native	0.0%	0.1%	0.1%
Asian	8.7%	12.3%	3.6%
Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
Some other race	0.4%	1.1%	0.7%
Two or more races	2.7%	3.8%	1.1%
Hispanic or Latino (of any race)	3.0%	4.9%	1.9%

Source: American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates, 2010 and 2019

While Arlington has limited racial and ethnic diversity compared to some of its neighboring cities, the town is home to a significant foreign-born population. Approximately 20% of Arlington’s residents have immigrated to the U.S. from some other part of the globe. Most have been in the U.S. for over a decade. Data also show that 20% of town residents speak a language at home other than English. Within this group, 3% identify as speaking Spanish, 9.3% speaking other Indo-European languages, and 7.3% speaking Asian and Pacific Island languages.

Education Attainment

Arlington is a well-educated community. In 2019, 70.9% of residents 25 years and older had a bachelor’s degree or higher, an upward trend from 2010 (Figure 3-2).

2. Household Characteristics

Table 3-5 shows that households with one or more people under 18 years and with one or more people 65 years and over increased 4.3% and 3.2% respectively from 2010 to 2019. This suggests that Arlington’s households are including more families but are also becoming older. Householders living alone decreased by 2.7% since 2010, and average household size increased slightly to 2.36.

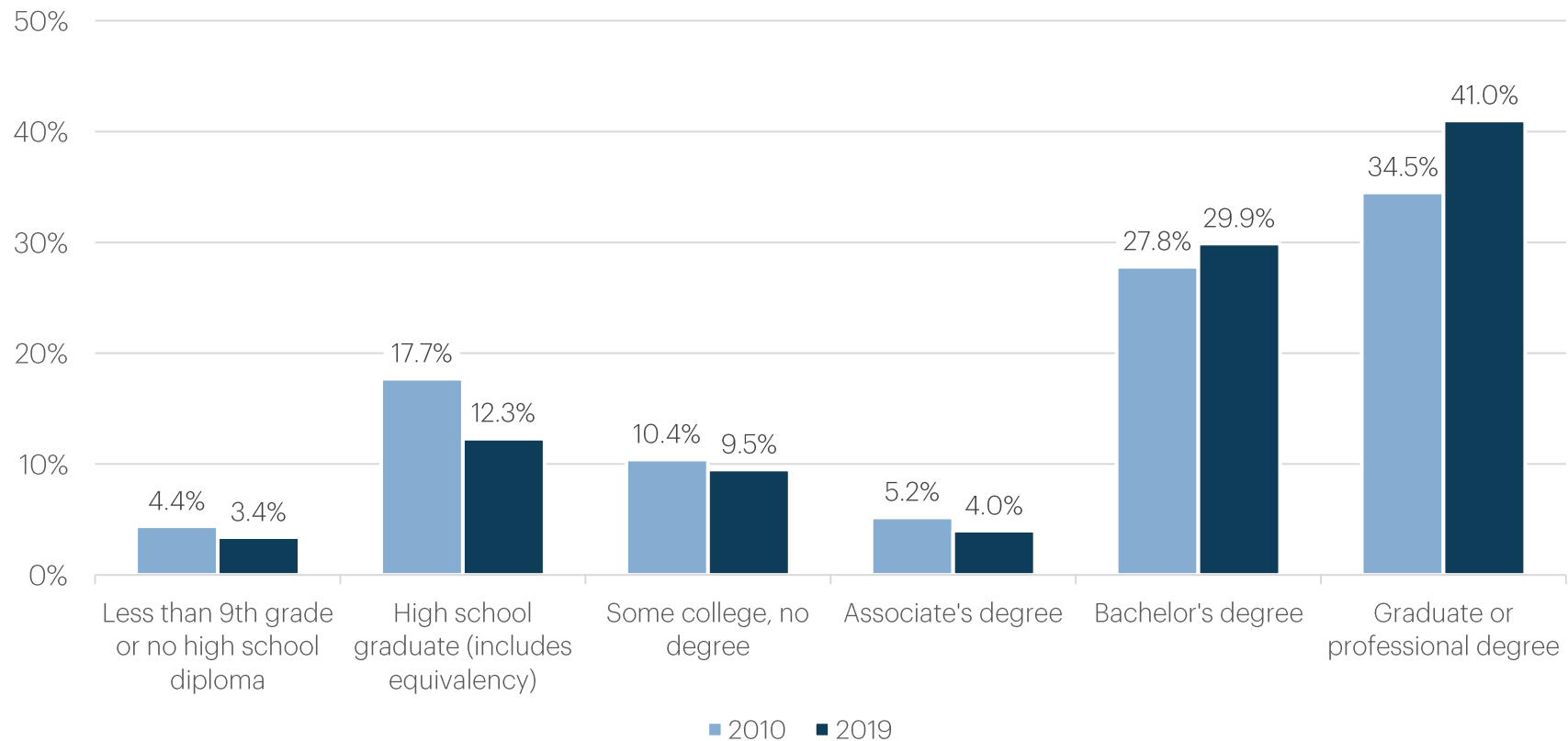
Table 3-5. Select Household Characteristics, 2010 and 2019

	2010	2019	Change
Total households	18,994	19,065	71
Average household size	2.22	2.36	0.14
Households with one or more people under 18 years	26.2%	30.5%	4.3%
Households with one or more people 65 years and over	26.4%	29.6%	3.2%
Householder living alone	34.6%	31.9%	-2.7%
65 years and over	10.8%	13.9%	3.1%

Source: American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates, 2010 and 2019

Projections from UMDI and MAPC also included the number of anticipated future households. In Arlington, an additional 3,866 household units are projected by 2040 (when comparing with 2019). This is a significant increase in anticipated future households, especially when compared to the small increase in households from 2010 to 2019.

Figure 3-2. Education Attainment of Arlington Residents 25 Years and Older



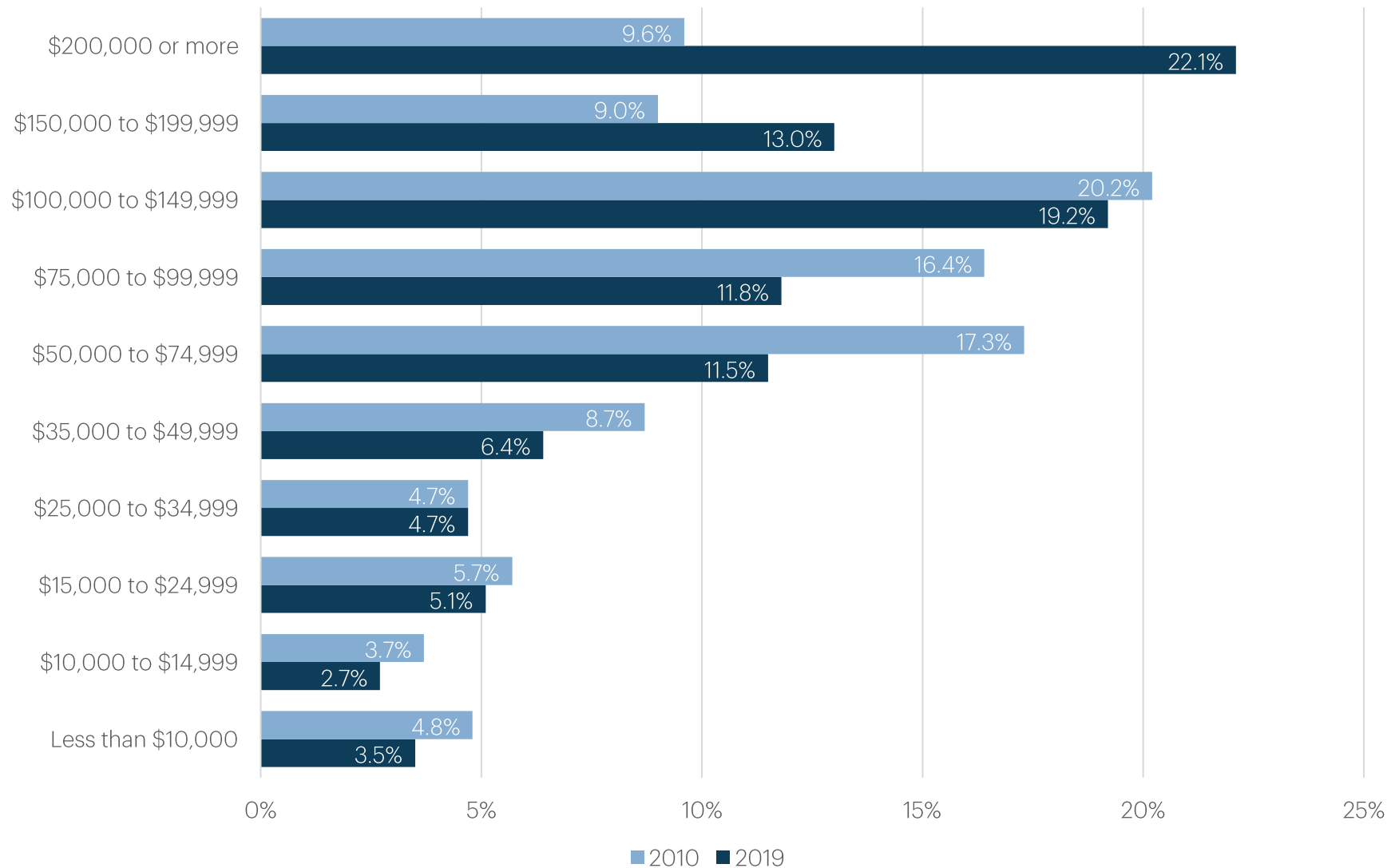
Source: American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates, 2010 and 2019

3. Income Characteristics

The median household income in Arlington was \$108,389 in 2019, a \$25,618 increase from 2010. Figure 3-3 shows the shifts in the income brackets and the

increase in the number of households with median incomes more than \$150,000. Approximately 54% of all Arlington households had household incomes over \$100,000 in 2019.

Figure 3-3. Arlington's 2010 vs 2019 Household Income Comparison



Source: American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates, 2010 and 2019

Despite Arlington’s relatively low poverty rates compared to the Boston Metro area, approximately 5.2% of Arlington’s population lives below the poverty level. Approximately 25.5% of households receive Social Security income in 2019, with another 6.6% combined receiving Supplemental Security Income, public assistance income, or SNAP (Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program) assistance for food purchases. The poverty rate for those under 18 is 3.5% and the poverty rate for those 65 and older is 7.7%.

4. Employment
Characteristics

The MA Department of Unemployment Assistance, Economic Research Department reports that the unemployment rate (not seasonally adjusted) for July 2021 in Arlington was 4%, compared to 5.7% in the Commonwealth, a 2.5% and 4.4% decrease, respectively, from 2020. The Town’s residents continue to be predominately employed in the education, health care, and social assistance services (30.5%) and professional, scientific, and management, and administration and

Table 3-6. Top Employers in Arlington

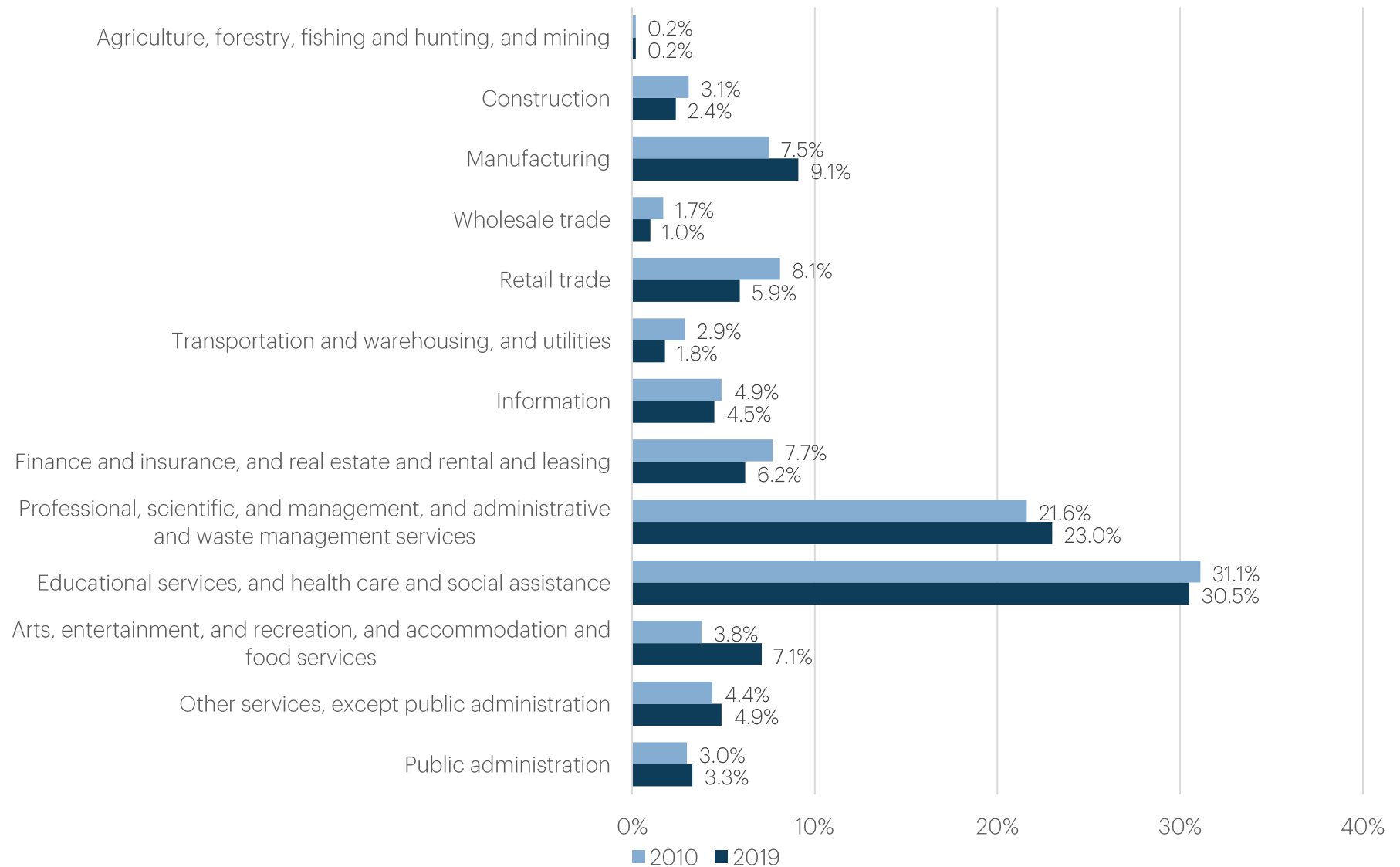
Company name	Address	Number of employees
Armstrong Ambulance Svc Inc	Mystic St	250-499
Arlington High School	Massachusetts Ave	250-499
American Alarm & Comms Inc	Broadway	100-249
Brightview Arlington	Symmes Rd	100-249
Children's Music Network	Court St # 22	100-249
International School of Boston	Matignon Rd	100-249
Massachusetts Highway Dept	Appleton St	100-249
Mirak Hyundai	Massachusetts Ave	100-249
Mirak Truck Ctr	Massachusetts Ave	100-249
Ottoson Middle School	Acton St	100-249
Park Avenue Nursing Home	Park Ave	100-249
Visiting Nursing & Community Care	Broadway # 2	100-249
Whole Foods Market	Massachusetts Ave	100-249

Source: Labor Market Information through the MA Department of Unemployment Assistance, Economic Research Department. Obtained August 27, 2021.

waste management services (23%), the latter of which is increasing (Figure 3-4).

Table 3-6 lists Arlington establishments employing more than 100 employees. The top two are Arlington Public Schools (Arlington High School specifically) and Armstrong Ambulance Services Inc., with a range of 250 to 499 employees.

Figure 3-4. Employment of Arlington Residents 16 Years and Older 2010 and 2019



Source: American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates, 2010 and 2019

5. Environmental Justice Populations

As discussed in Section 2.B.5 Enhanced Outreach and Public Participation, the Commonwealth identifies Environmental Justice (EJ) communities using ACS data, where U.S. Census Blocks meet one or more of the following criteria:

1. The annual median household income is not more than 65% of the statewide annual median household income,
2. Minorities comprise 40% or more of the population,
3. 25% or more of households lack English language proficiency, or
4. Minorities comprise 25% or more of the population and the annual median household income of the municipality in which the neighborhood is located does not exceed 150% of the statewide annual median household income.

Arlington has 21 census blocks that meet the requirements of Criterion 4 (with one census block also meeting the requirements of Criterion 2) (Map 3-2). These blocks generally encompass the commercial areas of Town and are in denser residential areas, with multifamily homes and apartment complexes. Neighborhoods outside of the EJ communities are predominately made up of single-family homes. As noted in Table 3-4, most residents identifying as a race

other than white selected Asian (12.3%), and 4.9% of respondents identified as Hispanic or Latino.

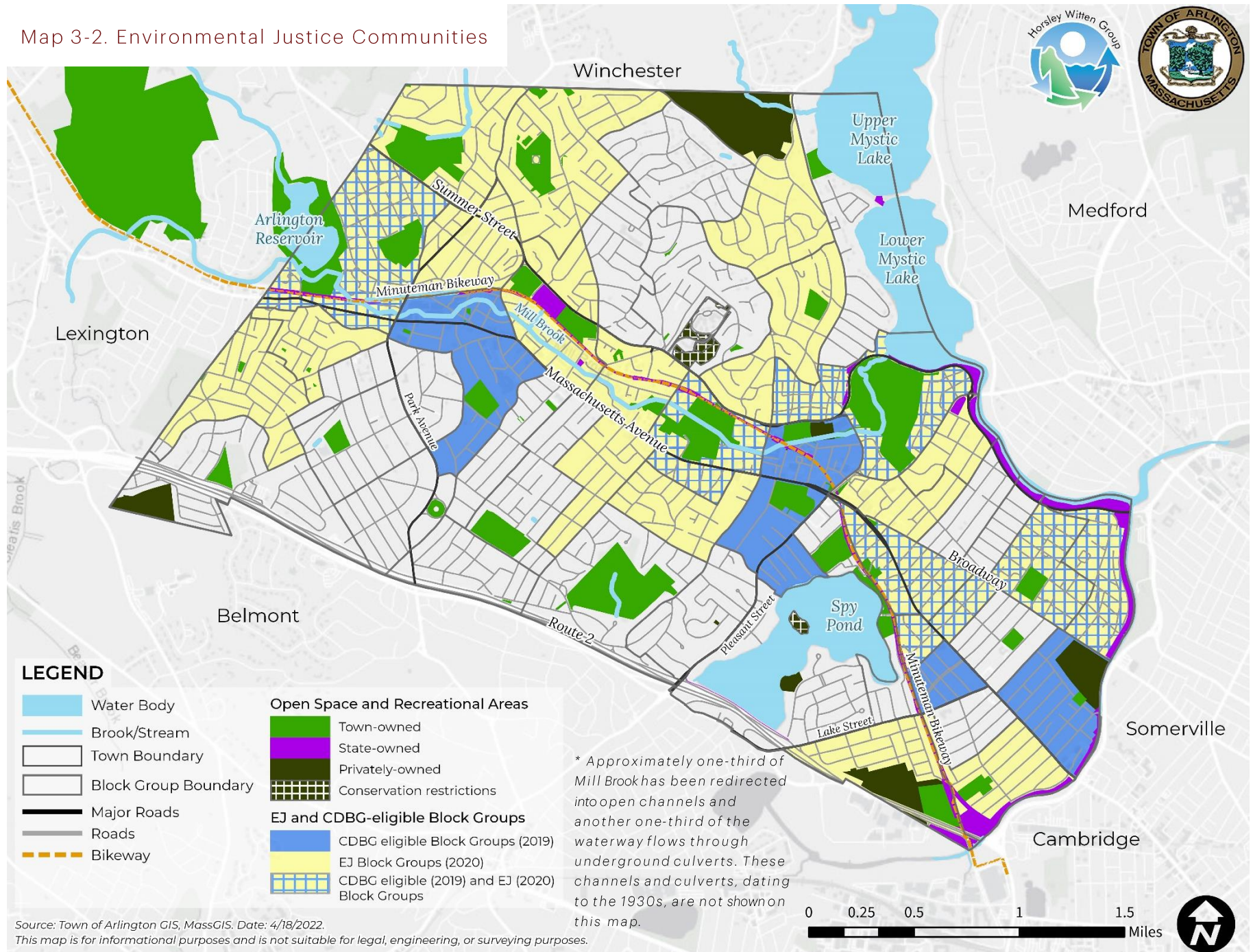
Another indicator used to identify lower income households was Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) data. The U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) CDBG program gives grants to more than 1,200 communities throughout the U.S. each year to address critical and unmet community needs, primarily serving low- and moderate-income individuals. Arlington is an Entitlement Community and has received CDBG grants directly from HUD annually since 1975. Block groups that qualify for CDBG program funds are also shown on Map 3-2.

D. Development Patterns and Trends

1. Land Use Patterns and Trends

Arlington has evolved from a farming community during colonial times to a town where roughly 88% of the land available for development is currently developed for a combination of residential and non-residential uses (e.g., commercial, industrial, etc.). Because Arlington is almost completely developed, it is unlikely that major changes in land use patterns will occur; rather redevelopment and rezoning are the primary tools that have been used for new development.

Map 3-2. Environmental Justice Communities



The majority of Arlington's land use today is low-density residential or a mix of residential and other types of uses like commercial, retail or office space. Arlington has a significant base of single-family homes, but many residents live in two-and-three family homes, condominiums, and apartment buildings. Nearly all (92%) of Arlington's two- and three-family homes were built before 1945, compared to 54% of single-family homes. These multifamily buildings are larger structures (2,767 square feet of floor area, on average) compared to single-family homes (2,018 square feet on average). They are also on smaller lots of 5,710 square feet on average compared to 7,218 square feet for single-family homes.² As a result, people living in these multifamily homes generally have less private open space and rely more on the Town's public open spaces and recreational facilities.

2. Infrastructure

Because Arlington is highly developed, its existing infrastructure is not expected to change drastically or to significantly determine the development of open space, although pressure for redevelopment has increased in recent years.

² Arlington Housing Plan 2022-2027, Adopted by Arlington Redevelopment Board January 24, 2022



Transportation Systems

Arlington has a variety of systems suitable for diverse methods of transport:

- The town's well-developed road system consists of approximately 102 miles of public streets, 23 miles of private streets, and six miles of state highways and parkways.
- The Minuteman Bikeway carries bicycle and pedestrian commuter and recreation traffic. This rail/trail conversion project runs through Arlington's

central valley (Mill Brook Valley), which also provides the most level and direct route through town. The Bikeway links directly to the Alewife T Station in Cambridge and extends 10 miles through Arlington and Lexington and into Bedford.

- In recent years, bike lanes and shared use designations have been marked on many sections of Massachusetts Avenue and on some other town roads. The Town began participating in the Bluebikes regional bikeshare program in 2020. The Town also appropriated funds to acquire and install bicycle racks to provide bike parking options at various schools, parks and recreational areas across town. Community Preservation Act funds are currently being used to study the feasibility of a trail connection from the Minuteman Bikeway in Arlington Center to the Mystic River Path along the Mystic Valley Parkway.
- The MBTA provides bus service that connects to the Alewife T Station, Harvard Square via North Cambridge, and to other communities, including Somerville, Lexington, Bedford, Medford, and Burlington. The MBTA also provides The Ride, a van for low-income residents with disabilities.
- The Arlington Council on Aging provides a jitney (van) service called "Dial-A-Ride." This service provides individualized routes and times of service to suit users' transportation needs. This service is

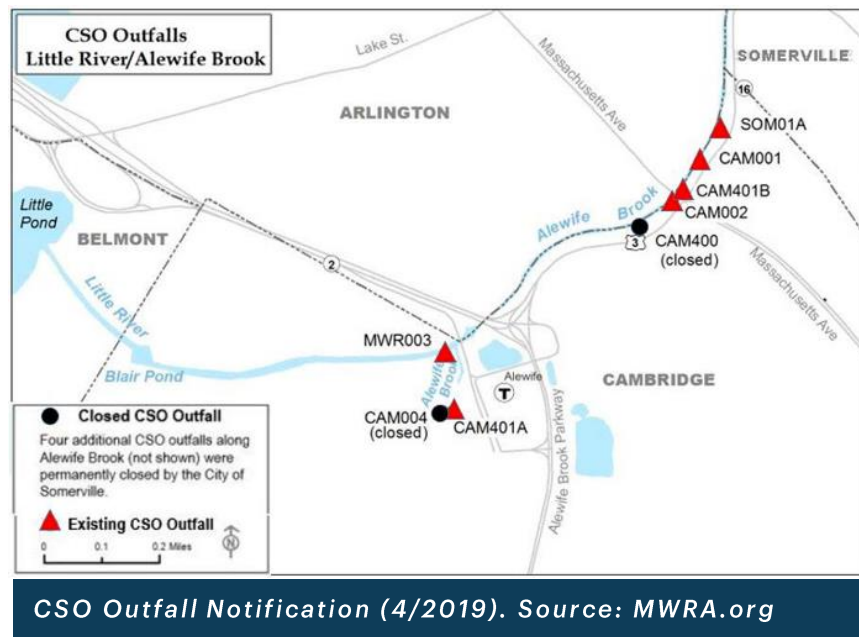
supported by a federal grant for people with disabilities, the elderly, and lower-income people. The Council on Aging also has a van to transport elders to the Senior Center for activities and to medical appointments on an as-needed basis for a small fee.

The Town is focused on improving mobility into and through Arlington by all modes. *Connect Arlington* (2021) is a 20-year strategy to ensure that all residents, workers, business owners, and visitors are provided a safe, reliable, multimodal transportation network that meets the needs of all people of all ages and abilities. The Plan lays out seven goals with strategies that will guide Arlington to meet this vision. It touches on all modes of transport, details specific locations where improvements can be made, and offers policy guidance for decision makers.

Water and Sewer

Arlington receives its drinking water and sewer service from the Massachusetts Water Resources Authority (MWRA). However, the Town's Water and Sewer Department performs maintenance and infrastructure improvements to the local water, sewer, and stormwater distribution systems. The entire town receives water and sewer service, with the exception of very few private wells and septic systems. They do not play a significant role in long-term planning.

There are five CSOs on Alewife Brook between Massachusetts Avenue and the Mystic River, all of them sourced from Somerville or Cambridge. The MWRA has proposed significant improvements to these outfalls to reduce wet weather discharges to Alewife Brook, and some of this work has been done. As noted in the section above on Regional Planning Efforts, however, the CSOs continue to overflow and affect the quality of life of Arlington residents.



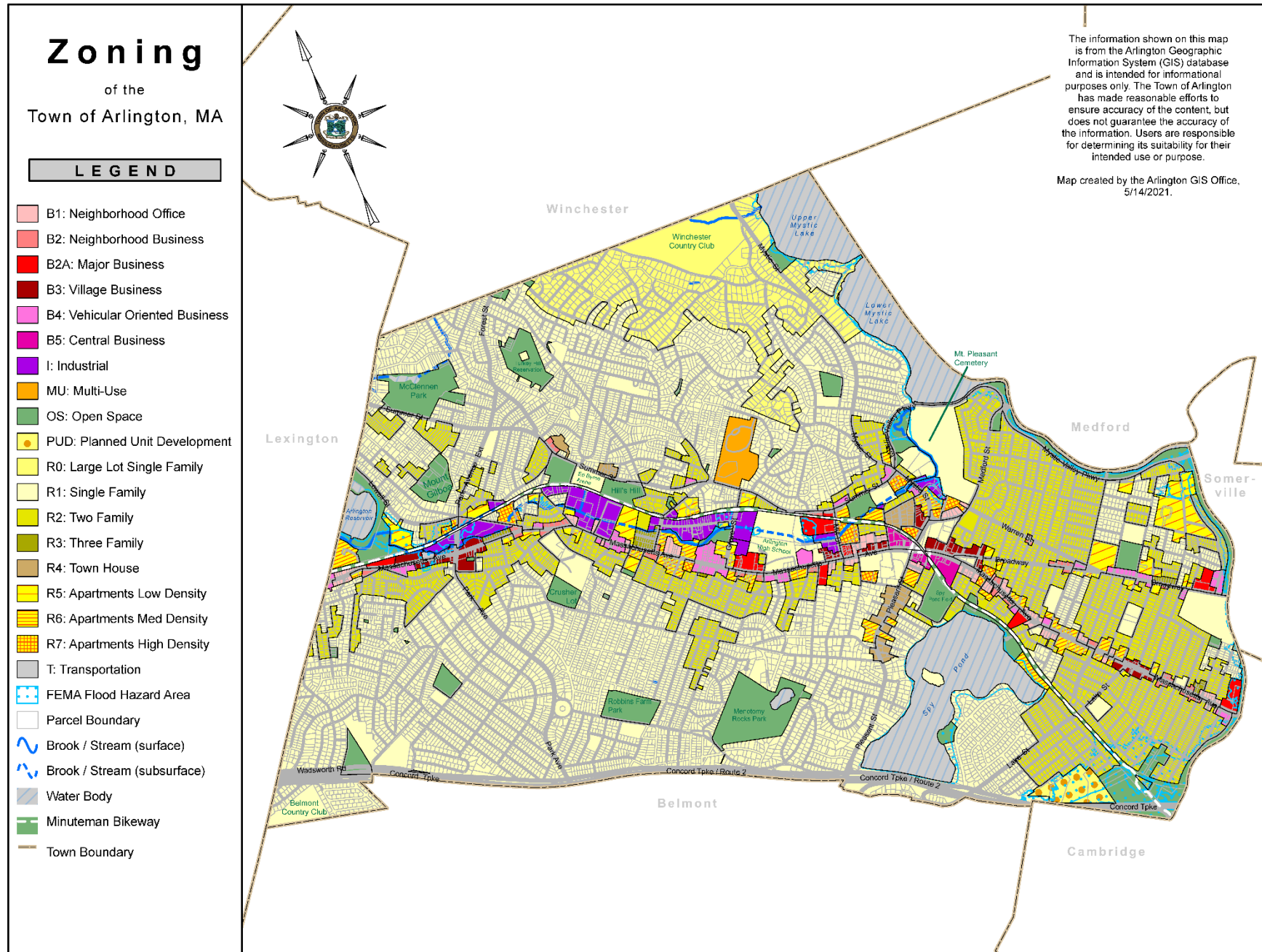
3. Long-term Development Patterns

As mentioned, the long-term development patterns of Arlington are already well established by current uses. Land use regulatory policy centers more on the redevelopment of existing sites and regulation by special permit for new uses. In 2015, the Town adopted its current Master Plan, which looks at all aspects of physical development (transportation, housing, commercial centers, public facilities, etc.) as well as possible zoning changes, impacts on natural resources and open space, and effects on historical and cultural resources.

Arlington Zoning and Local Regulations Governing Land Uses

Arlington Town Meeting in 2001 voted to approve the creation of an open space district, increasing the number of zoning districts to 19 (see Table 3-7 and Map 3-3). Nearly 50 Town-owned parcels, including parks, playgrounds and playing fields throughout the town, were transferred into this new district, adding an extra level of protection from development. Eight of Arlington's other zones are residential, six are business, and the others are zones for more specialized uses, such as industrial, Planned Unit Development, and transportation.

Map 3-3. Zoning Map



Path: G:\Maps\Planning\Zoning Standard Maps\Zoning Standard Maps 2021-05-14.aprx

Table 3-7. Arlington Zoning Districts by Land Area

Zoning district	District Name	Acres
R0	Large Lot Single Family	238.2
R1	Single Family	1,771.5
R2	Two Family	619.7
R3	Three Family	8.3
R4	Town House	19.4
R5	Apartments Low Density	63.7
R6	Apartments Medium Density	49.0
R7	Apartments High Density	18.7
OS	Open Space	275.9
PUD	Planned Unit Development	16.2
B1	Neighborhood Office	25.9
B2	Neighborhood Business	16.9
B2A	Major Business	22.2
B3	Village Business	30.2
B4	Vehicular Oriented Business	30.0
B5	Central Business	10.3
I	Industrial	48.7
MU	Multi-Use	18.0
T	Transportation	0.8
Total acres without water – 3,283.6		

Source: Arlington GIS, "zoning.shp". Table omits water area. With water, the total area in the GIS zoning map is 3,509.9 acres (5.6 sq. mi.) as found in the 2015 Arlington Master Plan.

Control of land subdivision rests with the Arlington Redevelopment Board (the Town's hybrid Planning Board acting under c. 40A and Redevelopment Authority

acting under c. 121B and the Town Manager Act). The Board also serves as the Town's Board of Survey pursuant to the 2009 law establishing that role. The Rules and Regulations Governing the Design and Installation of Ways were adopted by the Board of Survey in June 2010.

Arlington also has a land use regulation known as Environmental Design Review (EDR), which helps to improve the visual quality of the environment and is required for certain classes of special permits. Most major development projects are required to undergo EDR by the Arlington Redevelopment Board. EDRs have strict review standards. As part of the EDR, the board reviews the development plan for such elements as landscaping and relation of the site plan to the surrounding neighborhood. While these visual elements do not add open space to Arlington, they do affect the visual quality of the town (including its green character). They may also provide buffer zones between adjacent land uses. The EDR process is triggered where a new structure, or a new outdoor use, or an exterior addition or change in use meets requirements outlined in Section 3.4.2 of Arlington's Zoning Bylaw.

The Arlington Redevelopment Board will also use EDR procedures and standards for any development allowed by right or by special use permit in the Planned Unit Development District or Multi-Use District, parking in the

Open Space District, and proposals for a medical marijuana treatment center or marijuana establishment.

Build-out Analysis

Because Arlington's land is almost fully developed, this Plan does not contain a build-out analysis, which would show what could happen if the town developed all its land to maximum potential under existing zoning. This type of analysis is more revealing for rural or more suburban communities than for an older developed community like Arlington.

Long-term Changes to Land Use Patterns

The existing pattern of Arlington's land uses may evolve naturally over time with changes in local or regional circumstances, but as discussed previously, major changes are not anticipated due to the lack of large undeveloped land parcels. Arlington remains focused on the preservation of existing protected lands and on acquisition of small parcels when properties of interest to the Town or other entities, such as the Arlington Land Trust, may become available.

A significant circumstance that could change Arlington's land use patterns would be economic pressure for more intense development that might necessitate the rezoning of some land, although the Town has no intention to convert designated open spaces to other uses. Arlington has only a few

undeveloped private properties with development potential. However, these properties typically have development constraints.

For instance, the 17-acre undeveloped land that comprises the Mugar property in East Arlington is largely wetlands and floodplains. It has been the subject of numerous development proposals over the past 50 years or more, although Town Meeting has voted several times to protect the entire property as open space. The most recent development proposal for the site was submitted in 2016 as a Chapter 40B Comprehensive Permit for housing. A decision with conditions was granted by the Zoning Board of Appeals (ZBA) in November 2021. Among the conditions in the ZBA's decision is the establishment of a perpetual conservation restriction (CR) on a portion of the site, designated as the "Conservation Parcel," comprising approximately 12 acres. The entire project is currently on hold due to legal appeals, which are not expected to be resolved for several more years.